C I T Y M A N A G E R B U L L E T I N

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CITY MANAGERS' ASSOCIATION

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Harrison G. Otis, Executive Secretary

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MAKE ANNUAL REPORT A REAL TREAT

The preparation of an annual report gives to the city manager his one big opportunity to play host to his taxpayers. The fact that the charter usually requires such a report and that the city foots the bill simply increases the obligation resting upon the manager. The report should be a real feast, - a Thanksgiving dinner, if you will, - so full of fresh, wholesome ideas and food for thought that strangers will devour it from cover to cover. And the country is hungry for city manager reports that are palatable and satisfying.

We boys used to look forward to, and relish most, that Thanksgiving dinner for which we had helped to bag the rabbits or feed the turkey. The citizens will prize more highly the annual report, if they have been frequently called upon to help produce the achievements therein chronicled.

A real feast must be carefully planned long in advance. So too, the annaul report. Each week should yield some definite contribution of increased or added service. The field of community welfare should be cultivated to produce a rotation of crops. These crops may be gathered by securing monthly reports from department heads. To each such report should be added suggestions whereby the department's efficiency may be increased. Thus the next crop is planted.

A kodak is a handy harvesting tool for gathering "before-and-afters."

As the end of the year draws near, assemble the stores of facts and select the finest specimens of accomplishment. Sort well and plan the meal.

Warnings. 1. Many a good manager is a poor publicity man -- better call in the local newspaper writer and make him your chef rather than spoil an excellent meal by poor cooking. 2. "Too many cooks spoil the broth," - your department heads may not have been selected for their literary ability.

Having picked out the best stories, boil them down, after carefully removing the "I's". Season with comparisons. Unrelated facts are often insipid and hard to digest. These comparisons may be in figures, lines, circles, sketches or photographs. Apply them with judgment and remove any trace of bitterness.

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Use only the quantity needed to bring out the true value of the accomplishments. Stir in a bit of human interest to keep the pot from boiling dry.

Now prepare the financial statements. If these come to you already cooked from the auditor's delicatessen shop, be sure to inspect them carefully. Finances are a necessary but dangerous part of a report and of little value without proper comparisons. Most tables of statistics will stand condensing. Long inventories of bolts and nuts contain little nourishment.

In assembling the courses, three things must be borne in mind. (1) It is a report to the people and worthless unless read, - hence it must be readable. (2) It is for the people, hence copies must be delivered to all the taxpayers, or at least all the holders of realty. 3. It is to be paid for by the people, hence don't be extravagant by insisting upon embossed covers and thick volumes.

Now set your table. Reports must be attractively set up. Your public is not so hungry for municipal information that it will dig ravenously into cold hash served in uninviting packages over the clerk's counter. Select good paper, good type, good illustrations. Arrange the courses in logical sequence. You are selling good government. Your report should qualify as a "best seller" except that it must be quite free from "fiction".

Assuming that the stories of achievement are ready to be taken up, prepare them for the report by cutting into short paragraphs set off by spicy "sub-heads" in bold-face type. Each heading should state an interesting fact and not simply label a part of an exhibit.

From these headings, select the most toothsome bits as the ingredients of an appetizer. This may appear as a part of the manager's letter of transmission or serve as a "foreword" to the report. A copy of this "appetizer" should at once be forwarded to the secretary of the C.M.A. to be used as an achievement report in the association yearbook.

We are ready for dinner. Start off the report with bouquets, first from the Council to the public, then from the manager to the council, the department heads and to everyone in general.

Then comes the little "appetizer" followed by the real food. If properly prepared and served, the report will find a most enthusiastic welcome and Mr. Taxpayer will smack his lips and pass up his plate for more good government. Perhaps he will even pay his tax bill with pleasure.

For desert, set forth plans for proposed service and improvements for the coming year, not in full detail, but in light outline so as to leave your guests in a mood of good fellowship and anticipation.

Don't be alarmed at the occasional groan of the chronic curb-stone dyspeptic. It is reward enough to see the citizens as a whole smoking the pipe of political peace and planning for another year of united community service.

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ATTENTION CITY MANAGERS!

"It is time for us to decide where and when we shall hold our sixth annual meeting. The writer has taken such authority as is vested in him by the by-laws and has appointed an Executive Committee, to be composed of the three existing officers and the past presidents.

"This committee will decide matters of importance between conventions.

"To be guided in the matter of selection of the time and place for the convention, it will be necessary for the managers to express their desires, from which the Executive Committee can make a choice.

"Will each manager please take this as a personal request to advise the writer just where he believes the convention should be held, and at what time of the year?

Cordially yours,

(Signed) "C. A. BINGHAM, President, C.M.A."

The Training School for Public Service conducted by the Bureau of Municipal Research, 261 Broadway, N. Y., has announced that it will devote its chief efforts to training men for the profession of city manager. The course presumes a minimum of eight months intensive training and will be limited to the twenty men of those who apply whose previous training has best fitted them for such work. A full announcement appears in our Fifth Yearbook.

The enclosed questionnaire labelled, "RETURN TO THE BUREAU OF MUNICIPAL RESEARCH", is self-explanatory. The Bureau is to make every effort to collect and keep up to date, all available data concerning city manager cities. Because of the Bureau's many courtesies to the City Managers' Association, there is no need of urging all managers to respond to this request for co-operation.

ALTOONA PLANS DEVELOPMENT

The city plan and municipal expansion report drafted for the city of Altoona by Mann and MacNeille of New York under the Auspices of the Altoona Chamber of Commerce, are nearly completed. The combination report gives every promise of being of great value, not only to Altoona, which is certain to benefit, but to the rest of us who are looking into the city planning movement for new practical ideas. We are depending upon Manager H. G. Hinkle to notify us when the plans are complete so that copies may be secured. Incidentally, we may view the Altoona project as an association affair. Mr. Hinkle is one of our active members and Mann and MacNeille, the city developers, and M. P. Neighbor, secretary of the Altoona Chamber of Commerce are on our associate membership list. Can any of you report a better combination?

CHANGE IN BY-LAWS NEEDED

A change in the association by-laws seems to be advisable and will probably be proposed at the next meeting. Article 2 reads. "Dues. - The dues of each member shall be five dollars ($5.00) per year, payable annually in advance. Such year shall commence at the time of the regular annual meeting."

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There are three objections to this. (1) The date of the annual meeting is in no way determined and may be changed from year to year. Last year, we were urged to hold our annual meeting in June. This would have cut the "year" to seven months. (2) If a new member enters in September or October and pays his dues, he hates to be dunned in November for the next year's dues, and there is no provision for accepting less than a full year's dues, regardless of the time a member joins. (3) If the dues are "retro-active," a member entering the latter part of the year is entitled to receive all the bulletins and other "benefits" previously sent out during that year. This is obviously impracticable.

The logical solution is to drop out the second sentence of the article, thereby making each man's time of payment the anniversary of his "joining." Then draft a new article establishing a definite fiscal year, preferably beginning in November, so as to allow the incoming secretary to get after advertisers before January 1.

ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP NOT AFFECTED BY RESIGNATION AS MANAGER

Now that the C. M. A. has enlarged the program of service to its members it is interesting to note that active membership does not cease when a member resigns as city manager. The framers of the constitution very kindly provided for us "has-beens" by starting off the membership provisions, - "Any person who is or has been the administrative head, etc." Technically, we have some 36 active members, whose present address we know not. We are now trying to get in touch with all of them.

Among the active members who are in "good standing" with our cash book, tho not now serving as city managers are: Henry M. Waite, Lord Construction Co., New York (formerly manager at Dayton). Thos. H. Reed, Lawyer and Professor at U. of Cal., San Francisco. (mgr. San Jose), R. Stuart Royer, business mgr. Cham. of Com. Alexandria, Va. (mgr. Fredericksburg), A. M. Field, engineer, Rochester, N. Y. (mgr. Winchester, Va.) Thos. J. Murphy, Greensboro, N. C. (Mgr. High Point, N. C.), J. G. Watts, Vancouver, Wash. (Former townsite Mgr., Anchorage, Alaska), H. G. Otis, Mgr. Bureau of Memorial Bldgs., W. C. C. S., New York. (Mgr. Auburn, Me.), E. O. Heinrich, criminologist, San Francisco, (Mgr. Boulder, Colo.)

ANOTHER JUMP FROM ASSOCIATE TO ACTIVE

Fred W. Simonds has repeated the feat of Manning in jumping from our associate membership list to the active division. He has been appointed to the management at Elizabeth City, N. C. at $2,400, the maximum allowed by the present charter. Simonds was city engineer at Rahway, N. J., and learned of the opening at Elizabeth City thru. the C. M. A.

OPENINGS

GASTONIA, N. C. - Population from 16,000 to 20,000. Since the announcement in our last bulletin, a letter has arrived from R. C. Cherry, Mayor of Gastonia, stating that he desires application as no selection had yet been made. The salary will depend upon the man. Gastonia has a fine charter and commission.

KINGSPORT, TENN. - Population 10,000. From two sources have recently come requests for the names of possible candidates for the position of manager. One of these requests, coming thru the National Municipal League, states that the applicant should be an engineer experienced in municipal construction work and a fairly good "mixer". The other letter placed the probable salary at from $2,400 to $3,000.

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BRISTOL, VA. Population 9,000. On June 10th, five of Bristol's best business men were elected as commissioners, to take office Sept. 1st, at which time they will appoint a city manager. C. W. Roberts, one of our first associate members, is secretary to the Bristol Chamber of Commerce and requests the names of desirable men to place before the commission. The salary will range from $3,000 to $5,000.

ELIZABETH CITY, N. C. - having secured its manager from us, now asks to be advised as to a possible candidate for the position of sanitary inspector, with the suggestion that it be a lady,--All we need is a few lady members. They'll come in time.

No announcement has been received of appointments at Alcoa, Tenn; McAlester, Okla., Yoakum, Tex. and Salinas, Calif.

ALTERATIONS, ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS

H. V. Hennen follows P. J. Beyette as manager at Denton, Texas, and Glen H. Critchfield succeeds M. L. Wood at Weatherford, Okla.

The initial of Mr. Mitchell, manager at Lufkin, Texas, is L. instead of M. E. as our last bulletin announced. Mitchell served as manager at Mangum, Okla. for a short time prior to the appointment of Mr. Snell. He is a college man with civil engineering experience.

The acting manager at Boulder, Colo. is W. D. Salter, not Slater.

The initials of Manager Ephlin of Wheeling, W. Va. are CO and those of manager Martin of Ocala, Fla, RM.

The city council at Woodstock, N. B., has created the position of town manager by ordinance, and appointed Captain R. Fraser Armstrong as manager. Mr. Armstrong has been visiting New England towns and cities operating under the manager plan.

No reply has been received to our letters to F. G. Connelly, reported as manager at Estherville, Ia., but we learn that W. F. Hathaway is not actually city manager at Anamosa, Ia., the he is holding down the three jobs of city clerk marshall and superintendent of public works, salary $1,000. It is probable that Anamosa will soon become a manager city.

T. R. Wells is reported as manager at Morrilltown, Ark. This report is not confirmed. Information desired.

Efforts for the adoption of the city manager plan by Lockport and Ithaca, N. Y. failed at the recent elections. The vote was very close at Lockport.

Brantford, Ont., votes on the manager plan, - July 1.

Sallisaw, Okla. has elected a charter board pledged to the commission-manager plan, and the new charter is to be voted upon before August 20, 1919.

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Salinas, Calif. - population 4,000 has secured legislative approval for its city manager charter.

Blackstone, Va. - is reported to have been operating under the manager plan since June 1914. The position of manager was evidently created by ordinance and R. B. Stone writes that he has served as treasurer, clerk and general manager since the adoption of the plan.

W. J. Oviatt is announced as city manager at Villisca, Iowa. The position has probably been created by ordinance.

The bill to allow 6th class cities in California to adopt the manager plan, passed the legislature, but was not approved by the governor.

NEW MEMBERS

ACTIVE: Shelton S. Fife, City Manager, Charlottesville, Va.
J. W. Greer, City Manager, Bryan, Texas.
R. W. Orebaugh, City Manager, Westerville, O.
Chas. T. Park, City Manager, Alpena, Mich.

ASSOC.: Hagerstown, Cham. of Com., S. Jamieson, Sec., Hagerstown, Md.
C. P. Hatten, Sec. G. R. Citizens League, Grand Rapids, Mich.
Arthur C. King, Municipal Engineer, Westmount, N. J.
Mann and MacNeille, City Developers and Engineers, New York.
J. Godfrey Stutz, Student of City Government, Utica, Kansas.
Clarence E. Ridley, City Engineer, Port Arthur, Texas.
F. A. Torkelson, city engineer, Marquette, Mich.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

One of the first jobs of Manager L. L. Ryan at McCracken, Kans., is planning of a bond issue for extension of the power plant.

Beaufort, S. C., Hal R. Pollitzer, manager, is switching its power plant over from a part-time to a full-time basis and providing day current.

Hagerstown, Md. and Ypsilanti, Mich. are giving serious attention to the manager plan and campaigns are probable in the near future.

L. L. Ryan of McCracken, Kans. inquires, "Has the use of fuel oil in place of coal as a fuel for steam engines proved economical?"

Public Welfare Work has been started in Montrose, Colo., under Manager C. C. Smith. Weekly band concerts and community singing at the city hall are proving popular.

Much needed paving projects are under way at Auburn, Me. It is also reported that Manager E. A. Beck has been landing some excellent black bass while casting about on nearby lakes.

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One of the subjects for theses in the prize contest conducted by the National Municipal League is "The Present Status of the City Manager Plan, Its Application to Small Cities and Towns."

Abram Cook, manager at Cartersville, Ga., recently contributed an excellent article on the city manager plan to the Atlanta Constitution. He has the right idea in making use of some of the material appearing in our Fourth Yearbook.

At Cadillac, Mich., Manager Geo. Johnston has worked out a scheme to make the enforcement of lawn-sprinkling regulations easier. During the present dry spell, sprinkling is only permitted at certain hours of the day and the steam whistle at the power plant toots to indicate the "Zero Hours."

We learn with deep regret of the death of Chas. F. Wade of Albuquerque. Mr. Wade was perhaps the leading spirit in the adoption of commission-manager government at Albuquerque and has since served as a member of the commission. His interest in the movement has made his name familiar to most of the city managers.

The most recent title acquired by your secretary is "Manager, Bureau of Memorial Buildings, War Camp Community Service." The memorial building movement, originating in the office of The American City, has grown so large that The National Committee on Memorial Buildings has united with W. C. C. S. and H. G. O., who had been farmed out by the American City Bureau to the N. C. on M.B. was taken over with the other liabilities by War Camp Community Service.

John Collier who has served as manager at LaGrande, Ore., since Jan. of this year, is evidently on the job. Collier is 62 years young and has set us some pace. "Since January 1st, have had chlorination plant installed to purify water supply. Graded and rounded up seven miles of dirt streets for first time in several years. Had danger signals placed near school buildings. Substituted concrete culverts for galvanized at about one-fourth cost. Employed expert hydraulic engineer to investigate sources of better water supply. Induced county and city authorities to purchase 23 acre tract within the city for park as a war memorial, reduced outstanding warrants from $45,000 to $17,000 (reduction for 1918 about $10,000.)